

MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, February 20, 2008 3:35 p.m. Room 307 House Office Building, Lansing

Representative Mayes, Chair, called the meeting to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Representatives Mayes, Byrum, Angerer, Brown, Kathleen Law, Leland, Sheltrown, Walker, Nitz, Ball, Meekhof. (11/11)

Representative Meekhof made a motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting of January 23, 2008. No objections being offered, the minutes were accepted as presented.

The Chair laid the following bill before the Committee.

HB 5509 Mayes Trade; other; farm produce insurance act; provide for technical amendments.

Majority Vice-Chair Byrum assumed the Chair.

Chair Mayes spoke to the Committee regarding the provisions of HB 5509. Jeff Haarer, representing the Producers Security Services Section of the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), indicated support for the bill and answered questions.

Jim Byrum, representing the Michigan Agri-Business Association, submitted a card indicating support for HB 5509.

Representative Kathleen Law made a motion to report HB 5509 with recommendation.

FAVORABLE ROLL CALL:

Yeas: Representatives Mayes, Byrum, Angerer, Brown, Kathleen Law, Leland, Sheltrown, Walker, Nitz, Ball, Meekhof. (11/11)

Nays: None. (0/11)

Pass: None. (0/11) (11/0/0)

A sufficient number of members voting in the affirmative, the motion prevailed.

Chair Mayes returned to the Chair and laid the following bills before the Committee for the purpose of hearing testimony.

HB 5677 Palsrok Property tax; assessments; maple syrup production; include in definition of agricultural use.

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- HB 5678 Elsenheimer Property tax; personal property; maple syrup equipment and activities; exempt from personal property tax.
- HB 5679 Walker Food; processors; maple syrup producers; designate as food processing plants.
- HB 5680 Sheltroun Property tax; classification; maple syrup production; classify as agricultural property.

Representatives Sheltroun, Palsrok, Elsenheimer and Walker spoke to the Committee regarding the contents of HB 5680, HB 5677, HB 5678 and HB 5679. Representative Walker also discussed a proposed H-2 substitute for HB 5679.

Larry Steckelberg, representing the Michigan Department of Treasury, spoke to the Committee and answered questions. At this time, the Department indicated a neutral position on HB 5678 and HB 5680.

Ron Thomas, Jan Currey, and Roger Griner, representing the Michigan Maple Syrup Association, spoke to the Committee in support of HB 5677-HB 5680.

Jamie Callahan, representing the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Northwest Michigan Regional Chamber Alliance, submitted a card indicating support for HB 5677-HB 5680.

Jerry Wojtala, Deputy Director of the MDA Food and Dairy Division, and Rich Harlow, MDA Farmland Preservation Manager, submitted a card indicating support for HB 5677 and HB 5679.

Subsequent to discussion, Chair Mayes adjourned the meeting, the time being 4:24 p.m.

Representative Jeff Mayes, Chair

Catherine Petroskey, Committee Clerk
(517) 373-8538